

Message Text

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62

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AGR-20 EB-11 AID-20 CIAE-00 INR-09

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 RSR-01 INRE-00

/096 W

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P 272203 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9201

INFO DOD WASHDC PRIORITY

DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

USCINCSO PRIORITY

UNCLAS CARACAS 2607

DEPT ALSO PASS AGRICULTURE FOR US FOREST SERVICE

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SWEL, MCAP, VE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE USG ASSISTANCE TO GOV TO HELP COMBAT FOREST FIRES

REF: FORRESTER/ FINAN TELECON OF MARCH 27, 1973

1. VENEZUELA IS SUFFERING THROUGH WORST DRY SPELL IN DECADES AND FOREST AND GRASS FIRES HAVE RAVAGED MANY AREAS OF COUNTRY. DURING PAST SEVERAL DAYS FIRES IN AVILA NATIONAL PARK, GREEN, MOUNTAINOUS AREA WHICH RINGS CARACAS, HAVE DESTROYED THOUSANDS OF ACRES IN FULL VIEW OF CAPITAL. DESPITE BEST EFFORTS OF FIRE FIGHTERS, RUGGED TERRAIN AND LACK OF WATER HAVE HINDERED EFFORTS TO EXTINGUISH FIRES AND MANY ARE STILL BURNING. AFTERNOON MARCH 27 NOTED VENEZUELAN CONSERVATIONIST TOMAS BLOHM ASKED DAO TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER USCINCSO HAS AVAILABLE ANY CH-47 HELICOPTERS WHICH CAN BE USED FOR FIRE- FIGHTING, INDICATING AN OFFICIAL REQUEST MAY BE FORTHCOMING. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS CH-47' S ARE NOT, IN FACT, STATIONED IN PANAMA.

2. GIVEN POSSIBILITY GOV MAY REQUEST HELP, EMBASSY WILL APPRECIATE EFFORT TO IDENTIFY WHAT ASSETS, IF ANY, ARE AVAILABLE
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TO USG FOR THIS PURPOSE AND HOW THEY CAN BE REQUISITIONED WHEN
AND IF NEEDED. PROBABLY WE SHOULD WAIT UNTIL ASKED OFFICIALLY,
BUT SHOULD BE READY TO MOVE QUICKLY IF GOV DECIDES IT NEEDS
OUR HELP. ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY JOURNAL RECALLED IN ITS
MARCH 27 ISSUED THAT IN 1960 VENEZUELAN CONTRACTED FOR SUCH
AIRBORNE HELP FROM USG (FOR WHICH AID GOV PAID)
AND THAT IT WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING TO CONTAIN OUT- OF- CONTROL
AVILA FIRES.
MCCLINTOCK

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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Disposition Event:
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